

REMARKS

Claims 1-2, 6-12, 16-22, and 26-33 were previously pending in this patent application. Claims 1-2, 6-12, 16-22, and 26-33 stand rejected. Herein, Claims 1, 11, and 21 have been amended. Support for the amendments is found in Figures 2A and 2B of the disclosure. Accordingly, after this Amendment and Response, Claims 1-2, 6-12, 16-22, and 26-33 remain pending in this patent application. Further examination and reconsideration in view of the claims, remarks and arguments set forth below is respectfully requested.

35 U.S.C. Section 103(a) Rejections

Claims 1-2, 6-12, 16-22, and 26-33 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Takahashi et al., U.S. Patent Application Publication No. US2001/0024859 (hereafter Takahashi). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Independent Claim 1 recites (as amended):

A semiconductor device having a surface, comprising:
a plurality of **conductive sub-surface regions** of a first conductivity **each formed beneath said surface and each buried at a depth below said surface**, wherein said conductive sub-surface regions form a sub-surface structure for routing a body-bias voltage, wherein said sub-surface structure has a perimeter;
an isolation structure formed within said perimeter of said sub-surface structure such that said isolation structure creates a gap in said sub-surface structure; and
at least one metal structure formed above said surface, wherein said metal structure spans said gap and is coupled to said sub-surface structure via a plurality of tap contacts. (emphasis added)

It is respectfully submitted that Takahashi does not teach, motivate, or suggest the invention of Independent Claim 1. In particular, Independent Claim 1 recites the limitation, "a plurality of **conductive sub-surface regions** of a first

conductivity ***each formed beneath said surface*** and ***each buried at a depth below said surface***, wherein said conductive sub-surface regions form a sub-surface structure for routing a body-bias voltage, wherein said sub-surface structure has a perimeter," (emphasis added). The Office Action at page 2 cites elements 22nb, 23nb, etc. in Figure 49 of Takahashi as corresponding to the conductive sub-surface regions of Independent Claim 1. However, the elements 22nb, 23nb, etc. extend from the surface of the semiconductor device to a depth below the surface instead of being buried at a depth below the surface, as in the invention of Independent Claim 1. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that Independent Claim 1 is patentable over Takahashi and is in condition for allowance.

Dependent Claims 2 and 6-10 are dependent on allowable Independent Claim 1, which is allowable over Takahashi. Therefore, Dependent Claims 2 and 6-10 are patentable for the reasons above.

With respect to Independent Claims 11 and 21, it is respectfully submitted that Independent Claims 11 and 21 recite similar limitations as in allowable Independent Claim 1. In particular Independent Claims 11 and 21 recite the limitation, "conductive sub-surface regions...***each buried at a depth below said surface***," (emphasis added). As discussed above, Takahashi fails to teach, motivate, or suggest the cited limitation of Independent Claims 11 and 21. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that Independent Claims 11 and 21 are patentable over Takahashi and allowable for reasons discussed with respect to Independent Claim 1.

Dependent Claims 12 and 16-20 and Dependent Claims 22 and 26-33 are dependent on allowable Independent Claims 11 and 21, respectfully, which are allowable over Takahashi. Therefore, Dependent Claims 12, 16-20, 22, and 26-33 are patentable for the reasons above.

CONCLUSION

It is respectfully submitted that the above claims, remarks, and arguments overcome all rejections. All remaining claims (Claims 1-2, 6-12, 16-22, and 26-33) are neither anticipated nor obvious in view of the cited references. For at least the above-presented reasons, it is respectfully submitted that all remaining claims (Claims 1-2, 6-12, 16-22, and 26-33) are in condition for allowance.

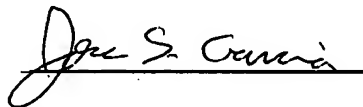
The Examiner is urged to contact Applicants' undersigned representative if the Examiner believes such action would expedite resolution of the present Application.

Please charge any additional fees or apply any credits to our PTO deposit account number: 23-0085.

Respectfully submitted,

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